CITY OF TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES
PUBLIC UTILITY ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES
MONDAY, JUNE 20, 2016
REGULAR MEETING

Regular meeting of the Public Utility Advisory Board of the City of Truth or Consequences, New Mexico to be held in the City Commission Chambers, 405 W. Third, Truth or Consequences, New Mexico, on Monday, June 20, 2016 at 5:30 P.M.

INTRODUCTION:

ROLL CALL:

George Szigeti, Chairman
Jeff Dornbusch, Vice-Chairman
Alvin Siffring, Member
Ron Pacourek, Member

ABSENT: Grant Montgomery, Member

ALSO PRESENT:

Juan Fuentes, City Manager
Jesus Salayandia, Water/Wastewater Director
Bo Easley, Electric Division Director
Andy Alvarez, Sanitation Director
Traci Burnette, Water/Wastewater Admin. Assistant
Renee Cantin, City Clerk

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Member Al Siffring moved to approve the agenda.

Member Pacourek said at the last meeting he requested the sewer rates be included on this agenda and it’s not on there.

Chairman Szigeti said we will have to put it on the next agenda. City Manager Fuentes asked him to submit it in writing to staff.

Member Pacourek said if he has requested an item it should be included on the agenda.

City Manager Fuentes said it helps staff to give them something in writing.

Vice-Chairman Dornbusch seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.
APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Regular meeting of Monday, May 16, 2016:

“Member Siffring moved to approve the May 16th minutes.”

Vice-Chairman Dornbusch seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

None.

Discussion/Action: To accept & approve the ditch metering agreement, lower Rio Grande Water Master District:

Water & Wastewater Director Salayandia read an email.

Vice-Chairman Dornbusch had questions regarding the overflow into the River.

Water & Wastewater Director Salayandia noted that they want to measure what goes into that pond.

Vice-Chairman Dornbusch feels they would be measuring evaporation.

Member Siffring and other members did not have page two of the agreement. Chairman Szigeti gave an overview of what it said from the working file originals.

Member Siffring asked if we have ever had an agreement like this before. Water & Wastewater Director Salayandia said no.

Vice-Chairman Dornbusch asked how long it pumps. Water & Wastewater Director Salayandia noted that he’ll have to pull up the numbers, but he thought it was 10 million a month.

Vice-Chairman Dornbusch is concerned they could take away our water rights for the pond. He is in favor of keeping track of where the water goes.

Chairman Szigeti had some concerns about measuring water.

Chairman Szigeti doesn’t see a problem as long as they measure what is going in and what is going out.

City Manager Fuentes said the city has a lease agreement with Mr. Bill Buhler for those rights. He’s not sure if it’s consistent with those.

“Vice-Chairman Dornbusch moved to approve passing this on to the City Commission.”

Chairman Szigeti asked if we know the amount of water we are allowed. W/WW Admin. Assistant Burnette said we have been metering this and it’s been reported. All we are doing is replacing our meter with their meter.
Chairman Szigeti seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

(This item was presented before the action above.)

**Discussion/Update: Water/Wastewater Department:**

Water & Wastewater Director Salayandia showed the Board an upgrade at the plant. He added on Phase 2b, and they are planning to amend and put the lift stations in there for Clancy, Nickel, and North Date Streets.

Chairman Szigeti went back to the previous item for action.

**Discussion/Update: Solid Waste Department:**

Sanitation Director Alvarez gave an update on Recycling; Gas Prices are going up; hoping for a Good Monsoon Season; just hired two more to help; one more Dump Truck; things have really picked up at the Collection Center; Poly Carts (there are 225 left).

Vice-Chairman Dornbusch asked if we have plans for the old dumpsters. Sanitation Director Alvarez noted that he put a few back because some commercial customers wanted them back.

**Discussion/Update: Electric Department:**

Electric Department Director Easley gave an update on the Steel Pole at Cedar and Riverside: Substation Testing; Replacing Poles & Trimming Trees.

Chairman Szigeti asked if any property owners are giving grief about trimming trees away from lines. Electric Department Director Easley responded no, they don't give any trouble.

Vice-Chairman Dornbusch asked how the Solar Array is doing and if it's putting out juice now. Electric Department Director Easley said they are real good. He sent an email to them about the weeds.

Chairman Szigeti said it would be nice to see the figures of the solar farm on a quarterly basis. We use to get a monthly report of water and electric use. We don't need monthly but a quarterly report would be nice.

Member Stirling asked if we had some numbers for the Walmart Solar.

**Discussion/Update: Utility Billing and Red Tag process:**

Interim Utility Office Manager Sonya Williams gave an update on the Cycles and where they are with the schedules.
City Manager Fuentes said with some of the issues, staff has been able to get everything caught up and getting back on track. However, because of the issues and the conversion we have not been going after red tags for past due bills. Sonya generated a report for some of the past due bills. We are going to start the Red Tag process again and we will give them a reasonable period and start with the higher bills and go from there.

Chairman Szegi asked about putting the information back on the bills that we lost. City Manager Fuentes responded the first thing was getting the bills up to date. Now the next phase will be going into Tyler to see what else we can do with the System. They will take one step at a time.

Chairman Szegi understands from the YESCO presentation, the new meter system would be compatible with Tyler.

Member Pacourek added he sat down with Sonya and she was very helpful and he appreciates that. Now the right things are being done even though there are still discrepancies. He gave some examples. Ms. Williams spoke to Tyler about putting the Solar Readings on the Bills and they seemed to think it should be fairly easy to add that information. Member Pacourek mentioned Budget Billing and Ms. Williams is working on that.

**Discussion/Action: Re-appointment of members to Public Utility Advisory Board; Alvin Siffring, George Szegi, and Jeff Dornbusch:**

Chairman Szegi said there are three who are up for reappointment this year. Member Siffring has indicated he will need to step down after many years of service.

“Member Siffring moved to approve recommending to the Commission the reappointment of Chairman Szegi and Vice-Chairman Dornbusch.”

Member Pacourek seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Member Pacourek asked what the process is for a vacancy. City Clerk Cantin said we would publish the vacancy and bring it back to the board.

**Discussion/Action: Re-organization of Chairman and Vice-Chairman:**

“Member Pacourek moved to approve leaving it the way it is.”

Member Siffring seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.
Discussion/Action: Ordinance 664 for renewable energy:

Member Pacourek said in your packet you have an update he feels should be applied to that ordinance. He reviewed his suggestions.

Vice-Chairman Dornbusch commented on paying the customer at the wholesale rate vs. KWh. Discussion was held by Member Siffring to the need for having this included in the ordinance. Chairman Szigeti said he doesn’t think he is looking out for the customers with this change.

Member Pacourek then read the section of the current ordinance related to Section 3.e. Chairman Szigeti feels it’s such an uncommon event to change it from Sierra Electric Coop. Member Siffring commented about the changes.

Member Pacourek asked if they feel there should be changes in the original ordinance. Vice-Chairman Dornbusch and Chairman Szigeti agreed there may be a need for some changes, but they haven’t reviewed it.

Vice-Chairman Dornbusch feels he is confusing the dollar amounts with Kilowatts. Member Pacourek said let’s talk about 3.c, then do we just take out the retail rate.

Ms. Williams responded when a refund is due we usually do it within 30 days. Chairman Szigeti said with that explained he doesn’t see any reason to change the original ordinance in that section.

Member Pacourek agreed to take wholesale rates out of all of it.

Chairman Szigeti said if we choose to drop it, we don’t need to make a motion.

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD:
None.

COMMENTS FROM STAFF:
None.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Public Utility Advisory Board, George Szigeti, Chairman, declared the meeting adjourned.

APPROVAL: passed and approved this 15th day of August, 2016, on motion duly made by  , seconded by  and carried.

George Szigeti, Chairman
Public Utility Advisory Board